

DC Bicycle Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2002

- 1) Quorum Call -- The meeting was called to order when a quorum of Council Members was reached. In Attendance were:

Amy Nevel
Conrad Smith
Denise D'Amour
Jacque Patterson
James Koski
Jim Sebastian
Rudi Schreiber
Lyn Stoesen
Tim Bouquet
Tom Whitley
Chris Holben
Steve Pinkus
Jim Godfrey
Merle Van Horne
Felix Fischer
Jeanie Osburn

- 2) Approval of Minutes -- The minutes from the May meeting were read and approved by the Council
- 3) Committee Reports -- Reports were heard from the two committees that have met since the May meeting:

Facilities Committee -- Dan Barry presented a report on the first Facilities Committee meeting. At that meeting, Coordinator Jim Sebastian gave his "Facilities 101" presentation, designed to provide basic information on the scope and design of bicycle oriented facilities. Discussion following the presentation focused on meeting participants' experiences with different styles and configurations of bicycle paths and parking in other cities.

Discussion during the 7-10-02 full Council meeting regarding Dan's report focused on the DC law requiring that commercial and residential landlords provide 5 bike parking spaces for every 100 car spots in their buildings. It was also mentioned that DC Business Improvement Districts are have installed bike racks in their areas, including the Golden Triangle and Downtown.

Legislative Committee -- James Koski reported on the second meeting of the Legislative Committee. This meeting focused on a review of existing DC laws and regulations regarding bicycles and bicycling, as well as crossover into vehicular and pedestrian laws and regulations. Throughout this review process, the Committee pointed out areas where DC laws and regulations could be improved upon. The Committee decided to work over the rest of this year to detail these proposed improvements in order to make specific recommendations to the Mayor and the DC City Council at the beginning of the 2003 session. The BAC will be apprised of these recommendations in advance of their being presented to the Mayor and the Council.

Following James' presentation on 7-10-02, the BAC discussed bicycle registration requirements in DC and the return rate for stolen bikes facilitated by local versus national registries. While there are no accurate figures for return rates, it was reported that according to Police sources most recovered bikes go unclaimed. The BAC deliberated on whether the current local registry could be improved upon, or whether it would be better to encourage registration through an existing national system.

- 4) Safe Streets Campaign -- Ellen Jones of the Washington Area Bicyclists Association provided the BAC with a report on the Safe Streets Campaign and events held during May 2002. The campaign distributed more than 20,000 safety brochures at the top 8 pedestrian and bicycle crash sites in the city. Police wrote citations to roughly 1,000 drivers, 200 pedestrians and 50 bicyclists for violating the law. There was a wide range of reactions to the campaign -- mostly good but some not-so-pleasant. WABA and others are working with the Metropolitan Police on ways to follow up this campaign. One idea being pursued is the insertion of the safety brochure in the tickets mailed to drivers caught on camera running red lights. Bicycle riding instruction courses are also being offered by WABA to the public.
- 5) Metropolitan Branch Trail Update -- Chris Holben, the still-newly-hired coordinator for the Met Branch Trail, reported on recent developments in getting the trail in place. The biggest issue facing the trail at this time is the contentious alignment in Takoma Park, where the trail will pass near the Metro Station and other new and existing development in that area. A right-of-way study is being conducted for the whole trail, with a special study on Takoma. There are promising developments at the Rhode Island, where an idea for a bridge to the Metro is under moving forward. At New York Avenues Metro, work will begin soon on the station and the trail.
- 6) Other Business --

Jim Sebastian reported that the year's allotment of 100 new bike racks will start being installed in August.

Jim reported on his test ride of the new Segway personal transportation device. He thought it was nifty, but expressed concerns on how cities will deal with them being on pedestrian-oriented sidewalks. In DC, where bikes are excluded from sidewalks in

the downtown area, a similar prohibition would apply to the Segway under proposed legislation. In fact, Jim reported that the Segway manufacturer is pushing laws in states around the country that would specifically allow Segways on sidewalks. Amy Nevel recommended that the Segway issue be handled by the Legislative Committee.

Walk To School Day will take place at two schools in DC this fall. The BAC would like to explore adding a bike-to-school promotion that would focus on safety issues of children and bikes.

Watts Branch Trail rehab design is underway in order to improve the trail and keep cars off the trail and inhibit illegal dumping.

Access in the Capital Hill area was discussed as well. Concern was expressed that access has been denied on certain streets due to construction and as a result of security measures being put in place. Denise D'Amour suggested that the Safety Committee draft a letter to the Mayor on this issue that would express our concern that safe and direct bike routes not be permanently eliminated. The letter should be circulated to the Architect of the Capitol, the Capitol Police and others. Rudi Schreiber made a motion, seconded by Amy Nevel, and passed by voice vote.

Renovations being conducted to the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge were discussed. The sense of the BAC is that these renovations should make the bridge more bike friendly by widening sidewalks on both sides of the bridge.

- 7) Adjournment -- The meeting was adjourned by 8:00 pm.